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How to submit a book for State of the Arts

To submit a book by a Montana author for inclusion in *State of the Arts*' "About Books" section:

Please send a copy of the book to *Lively Times*, 33651 Eagle Pass Trl., Charlo, MT 59824; or submit the following information electronically to writeus@livelytimes.com or mac@mt.gov:

- Title, author, publisher, publisher's address and month/year published;
- Price and whether it's hard- or softcover;
- A brief description of the book (no more than 200 words), and a short bio of the author;
- A cover image: minimum 200 dpi in pdf, jpg or tiff file;
- If other publications or authors have reviewed the book, send a brief sampling of those remarks.

If you would like us to return the book, include a note with it saying so. (We will pay for shipping.)

E-books: We'll also mention books that are only electronically published: send title, author, a cover image, website for downloads, and a brief paragraph about the book.

Books submitted to *State of the Arts* appear in this publication at the Montana Arts Council's discretion and as space permits, and will not necessarily be reprinted in *Lively Times*.

ABOUT BOOKS

Warrior in the Ring: The Life of Marvin Camel, Native American World Champion Boxer
By Brian D'Ambrosio
Published 2014 by Riverbend Publishing, Helena, MT

\$29.95 hardcover; \$15.95 softcover

In the Golden Age of boxing, Marvin Camel – a mixed blood from the Flathead Indian Reservation – defied all obstacles of race, poverty and geographical isolation to become the first Native American to win a world boxing title.

With details gleaned from years of frank interviews with Camel, his family, friends and former opponents, as well as seasoned boxing insiders, Helena author Brian D'Ambrosio captures the drama, danger, beauty, and ugliness of boxing. *Warrior in the Ring* also portrays the life of a stereotype-shattering man who inspired his people and boxing fans everywhere with his courage and achievements.

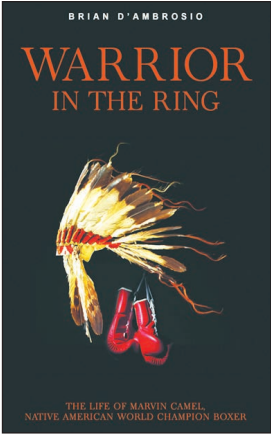
Born to an African-American father and a Salish Indian mother, and reared in a family of 14 children in a three-room house, Camel's path to two world championships ran through a gauntlet of cultural and physical barriers. Camel won the first cruiserweight championship in the world in 1979, gaining the World Boxing Council's new title, and he won a world title again in 1983 from the International Boxing Federation.

When he fought, he wore traditional cultural attire into the ring – a flowing eagle-feather headdress and deerskin vest – competing on the same cards as boxing icons Roberto Duran, Larry Holmes, Sugar Ray Leonard, and Bob Foster.

Camel's journey was an example of gritty determination: punishing runs on Montana's back roads, relentless training in make-shift gyms, sleeping in beat-up cars before fights in Las Vegas, and even training and fighting for a world championship in a foreign country, alone.

He survived with his lightning-fast fists and fierce inner drive to succeed. But with success came sacrifice and pain, both physical and personal, including a widening rift between Camel, his family, his tribe, and his home state.

D'Ambrosio's vivid account of Camel's rise and fall includes a cast of colorful characters even a novelist would find hard to conjure. Along the way, the author casts new light on a sport that pushes the parameters of civilization and examines Camel's life in the context of race, economics and cultural isolation.



Simple Arithmetic and Other Artifices

By Bruce Morton
Published 2015 by Christopher Matthews Publishing, Bozeman, MT
\$12.95 softcover

Bozeman author Bruce Morton sets the tone quickly for his first collection:

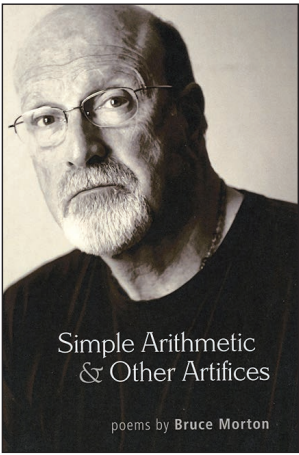
"I do not wish to be/ a poet who scribbles/ about any and every/ coming and going./ every indignation/ ... Better to pile it on/ the detritus of observation/ in a red wagon, bright/ and exquisite and run/ it off a cliff."

Although his poems rarely plunge off precipices, he does take a direct, often ironic look at the human experience. Love, for example – always fodder for poets – gets this little gibe: "Yes, love is thought to be nifty./ Its chances of lasting are fifty-fifty."

Like the spider he admires, Morton plies cadence, word play and metaphor skillfully, careful " ... we do not become/ dizzy in our spinning/ nor entangled/ in what is spun."

Composer Eric Funk, who has set some of Morton's poems to music, praises the writer for "a kind of humble wisdom seasoned by a razor-sharp wit." And former Montana Poet Laureate Sandra Alcosser notes, "With the wicked humor and welcome brevity of Horace and Catullus, Bruce Morton celebrates the mysteries and foibles of our species."

The author, who was born in New York City, has lived in Bozeman for 30 years. He's a librarian at Montana State University where he also teaches Honors seminars.



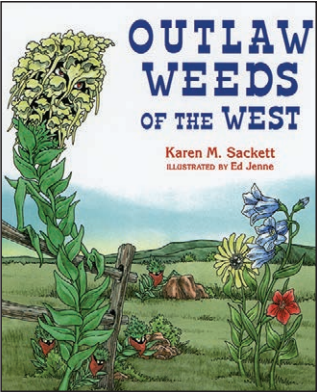
Outlaw Weeds of the West

By Karen M. Sackett; illustrated by Ed Jenne with botanical drawings by Nancy Seiler
Published 2014 by Mountain Press, Missoula, MT
\$14 softcover

This useful guide for readers of all ages sheds light on the nemesis of the plant world: noxious weeds. Author Karen Sackett explains that ordinary weeds – for example, dandelions in your lawn – may be unwelcome, but are not necessarily harmful. Noxious weeds, however, grow not only where they are not wanted, but can take over a landscape, crowding out the native plants and upsetting an ecosystem's balance.

The book is illustrated with colorful photographs and botanical drawings to help readers clearly identify the invaders. Emphasis is given to the 10 most "not wanted" weeds in the West, and describes their appearance, growing habits and preferred environments. It also offers tips for eradicating them.

To maintain a healthy environment for people and animals, control of noxious weeds is necessary and Sackett devotes a chapter to information on this topic.



Herbicides, biological controls, hand pulling, burning, mowing, plowing and use of grazers, like goats, are all tools. But the "the most important weapon in the war against weeds is you!" notes the author. In your own yard or enjoying public open spaces, be on the lookout for these invaders. Learn to identify them and report them to your county weed office.

Sackett also advises wearing gloves to pull noxious weeds, as many have toxins or thorns that may be harmful. She also urges weed warriors to dispose weeds in the trash, rather than leaving them on the ground, and to check gear for "hitchhikers" when hiking or horseback riding.

The book finishes with a glossary, a list of scientific names of weeds mentioned in the book, and a bibliography to expand your knowledge on the topic.

Sackett has an elementary education degree and a minor in speech pathology. She lives near Bozeman, where she maintains a healthy forest on her land, working with the Montana Master Forest Stewardship Program.

– Judy Shafter

American Kestrel: Pint-Sized Predator

By Kate Davis, with photographs by Davis and Rob Palmer
Published 2014 by Mountain Press, Missoula, MT
\$18 softcover

"Colorful, noisy, brash" is how Bitterroot Valley author and educator Kate Davis describes the subject of her latest collaboration with Colorado photographer Rob Palmer. The American Kestrel, Davis tells us, is the smallest falcon in North America, and easily recognizable by its colorful plumage and hovering flight posture while seeking prey. About the size of a robin or a Killdeer, the kestrel is a savvy hunter that feeds upon a variety of insects and small vertebrates and invertebrates.

The book offers hundreds of facts about kestrel behavior, encompassing habitat, hunting, mating, family life, migration, and the general health of the species.

Both Palmer and Davis contribute their incredible photographic skills to the work. Enormous patience and a keen eye for what makes a spectacular shot are the hallmark of these two artists. Pictures of kestrels in flight, tiny nestlings peeking out from an opening in a hollow tree, and birds returning from the hunt with prey nearly the size of their own bodies are just a few of the highlights.

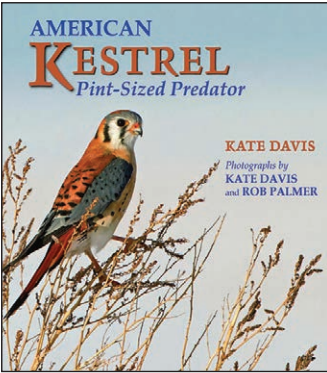
The kestrel population has been declining in some parts of the country, and holding fast in others. Several factors are thought to be responsible for dwindling numbers, including environmental toxins, climate change and habitat destruction. Working in its favor is the kestrel's ability to adapt to the human landscape, taking up residence under bridge spans, in the eaves of buildings and inhabiting nesting boxes built for other species.

In the book's last chapter, Davis encourages readers to become citizen scientists and notes that volunteers and hobbyists have contributed their observations to organized research and monitoring programs. The book concludes with plans for building a kestrel-nesting box, and tips about where to place it ("Good luck!" writes the author).

Davis, founder of the nonprofit Raptors of the Rockies, has authored several previous works, including *Falcons of North America*, *Raptors of the West* and *Raptors of the Rockies*.

Palmer is an award-winning photographer, most noted for his photographs of raptors in flight. He was the principal photographer for *Sky Hunters: The Passion of Falconry*, and contributed to *Falcons of North America*, *Prairie Owl*, and *On Feathered Wings: Birds in Flight*.

– Judy Shafter



Black River

By S.M. Hulse
Published 2015 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing, New York, NY
\$24 hardcover

Wes Carver is keeping his promise to take his wife home to Black River, Montana. He had hoped to enjoy her gentle companionship for the drive, but instead, a box with her ashes rests on the pickup seat next to him.

Wes grew up in Black River and followed in his father's footsteps, working as a corrections officer at the Montana State Prison. He and Claire spent the first 10 years of their marriage in this town, raising her son and making Wes's musical talents a pleasurable focus of their lives away from his job.

When a riot erupts at the prison, Wes is held hostage for three days and brutally tortured by an inmate. His hands are so severely damaged that Wes is no longer able to play his beloved fiddle. But the emotional scars are even deeper, affecting his family and eventually separating his stepson from the household.

Wes and Claire move away, and now, 20 years later, he returns to bury his wife, face his adult stepson, and testify at the parole hearing for the man who inflicted the pain and suffering during the riot.

Inspired by the true story of the 1959 riot at the Old Montana Prison, Hulse explores the themes of revenge, justice, and redemption, moving back and forth in time to reveal events that shape her characters.

"By making Wes's suffering so palpable, Hulse makes it even more moving when, in the novel's final pages, he achieves something he's been seeking for a very long time: grace," writes *Kirkus* in a starred review.

The author's love for the western landscape, and her knowledge of fiddle playing and horses enhance the plot and give it authenticity. Her writing in this taut debut has earned comparisons to western authors Annie Proulx, Wallace Stegner and Kent Haruf from *Library Journal*.

Hulse received her BFA from The University of Montana, an MFA from the University of Oregon and was a fiction fellow at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She lives in Spokane.

– Judy Shafter

